



# Transitioning Youth



## Winter 2014

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Welcome to the winter edition of the Maryland Transitioning Youth Newsletter. As we start planning for a new year in 2014, families should always remember that they are not alone as they work with their son or daughter to make decisions for the future.

In addition to linking with family organizations please connect with us on **Facebook**. News and local events are regularly posted for youth and families.

### Transition Planning

#### Self Determination & Advocacy

As students exit high school they will need to be able to advocate for themselves when making their own decisions and requesting accommodations. Whether a student is employed in college or with an adult service provider, being able to make decisions for oneself and then advocate for them to others is important.

Youth in high school: You can start by being prepared for your next IEP meeting. Be ready to look at the IEP before the meeting and then express your goals for the future. Next, tell the rest of the IEP Team what you think you need to reach those goals. This is the first step in determining your future after high school.

As youth and their parents figure out how to make the transition from parent advocacy to youth led decision making, there are multiple resources to assist in the journey. For more information on self determination and advocacy, visit the [Maryland Transitioning Youth Website](#).

### Program Spotlight

#### Centers for Independent Living

Centers for Independent Living (CILs) are private, consumer controlled, nonprofit,



nonresidential organizations that are designed and operated within local communities by individuals with disabilities. This means that at least 51 percent of the board of directors and staff at every center is a person with a disability.

CILs have years of experience in peer mentoring and independent living skills training. They provide an array of independent living services including information and referral; individual and systems advocacy; benefits counseling; and nursing home transition. In addition, many CILs provide services and programming specifically designed for transition aged youth. The Independent Living philosophy emphasizes consumer control: the idea that people with disabilities are the best experts on their own needs; have crucial and valuable perspectives to contribute; and deserve equal opportunity to decide how to live, work and play in their communities.

For more information on the services offered in your area, contact the [CIL serving your county](#).

## Notices

### **2014 Youth Leadership Forum**

Applications for this year's YLF will be posted in INSERT DATE

[Click here](#) for regular updates, including how to apply

For all other announcements, visit us on [Facebook](#).

The Maryland Transitioning Youth Website is sponsored by the Governor's Interagency Transition Council for Youth with Disabilities and is designed to provide information and resources to youth and young adults with disabilities and their families.

For more information visit at [www.mdtransition.org](http://www.mdtransition.org)  
or email [mdod@mdod.state.md.us](mailto:mdod@mdod.state.md.us)

